Saint Paul Planning Commission City Hall Conference Center 15 Kellogg Boulevard West

Minutes October 22, 2010

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, October 22, 2010, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present:

Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Halverson, Merrigan, Porter, Thao, Wencl; and Messrs. Alton, Commers, Connolly, Fernandez, Gelgelu, Kramer, Nelson,

Spaulding, Ward, and Wickiser.

Commissioners

Mmes. *Wang, *Young, and Mr. *Schertler.

Absent:

*Excused

Also Present:

Donna Drummond, Planning Director; Tom Beach, Department of Safety and Inspections; Allan Torstenson, Luis Pereira, Christina Morrison, Jessica Rosenfeld, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic

Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes October 8, 2010.

MOTION: Commissioner Commers moved approval of the minutes of October 8, 2010. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Donnelly-Cohen announced that the nominating committee recommendation for an open position on the executive committee will be taken up under old business on today's agenda.

III. Planning Director's Announcements

Donna Drummond noted that a flyer about the Great River Park Master Plan process had been distributed to commissioners at their places, and that this flyer had also been emailed earlier. There is interest in adopting the Great River Master Plan as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Planning Commissioners are encouraged to go to any of the remaining sessions to find out more about the Great River Park Master Plan process.

Ms. Drummond also announced that the City and the region were recently awarded two federal grants. The City had submitted several proposals along with other cities and states throughout the country for a Tiger II Grant. The City's Complete Streets proposal was awarded \$250,000 in funding to develop a complete streets policy for the city. The Twin Cities metropolitan region was awarded a \$5 million Sustainable Communities grant through a joint program funded by HUD, DOT and EPA. The focus of the planning grant is to better integrate communities with transit. And a portion of that grant will be targeted to Central Corridor.

At City Council last Wednesday, public hearings were held on the GIS Zoning Map and Currency Exchange zoning amendments. One person testified on the latter. Consideration of final adoption will be in one week for both items.

IV. Zoning Committee

SITE PLAN REVIEW – List of current applications. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

One item to come before the Site Plan Review Committee on Tuesday, October 26, 2010, the Midway Commons located at 1461 University Avenue West, renovate two retail buildings, one with drive-thru, and reconfigure parking lots.

OLD BUSINESS

#10-797-728 2446 University appeal — Appeal of staff determination that 10 parking spaces on the east side of the building at 2446 University Avenue cannot be used or counted for zoning purposes because the only access to these parking spaces is across the adjacent property. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

Commissioner Kramer explained that this case had been laid over. It was an appeal of staff's determination regarding the parking spaces at that location. The City had previously issued approval for the parking spaces, but upon further examination it became clear that the access to the parking was not through the property owner's land, but over someone else's property. City staff reversed their previous approval and the property owner appealed the City's revocation. Staff received additional clarification from the city attorney and recommended denial, the Zoning Committee concurred and recommends denial of the appeal.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Kramer moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to deny the appeal. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

#10-901-134 Jennifer Lee – Re-establishment of nonconforming use as auto repair shop. 930 Duluth Street, SW corner of Atlantic and Copley. (Luis Pereira, 651/266-6591)

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Kramer moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the re-establishment of legal nonconforming use status subject to additional conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Zoning Fee Study

Review fee schedule for zoning applications. (Patricia James, 651/266-6639)

Commissioner Kramer said that there was one outstanding issue regarding the cost of shared parking permits, so staff examined what had occurred in the past and decided that there was not any real data on cost for those and it ended up not being any change to that fee. But the rest of these are in most cases increased zoning application fees for variances, appeals etc. The last time there was an increase was in 2005.

<u>MOTION</u>: Commissioner Kramer moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the resolution and forward on to be adopted by the Mayor and City Council. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Commissioner Kramer announced the items on the agenda for the next Zoning Committee meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2010.

V. Housing Action Plan, presentation by Luis Pereira, PED staff. (Luis Pereira, 651/266-6591)

Luis Pereira, PED staff, gave an informational presentation on the Housing Action Plan 2010-2013. He talked about the housing policy framework, the draft plan and yearly updates to the Housing Action Plan. The Comprehensive Plan's Housing Chapter (*Housing Plan*) is the guiding document for the ten-year period, which shows how the city can meet its forecasted growth. Part of that is making sure the City provides its share of regional affordable housing needs. The key strategies of the *Housing Plan* are to build on Saint Paul's strengths in the metro housing market, to preserve and promote established neighborhoods, and ensure the availability of affordable housing across the city.

The HUD 5-year Consolidated Plan is a five-year planning document that assesses and addresses the City's housing and community development needs (2010-2014). The document outlines how HUD funds will be utilized, i.e. sets goals for housing activities. The difference from the Housing Action Plan is that the Consolidated Plan is for HUD, both housing and community development, the plan goals are based only on CDGB, HOME, ESG funds, but not other funding sources. The housing focuses in on affordable options (70% of funds must benefit low and moderate income city residents). In comparison, the Housing Action Plan is an implementation/work plan, it doesn't change policy, and it gets more specific about what the City can do in the 2010-2013 period. The last time this was done was in 2005 and the Housing Action Plan was done on annual basis. Part of the reason why they chose to do a three-year period versus a one-year period is that the economy right now is in a difficult situation. Mr. Pereira said that the City has a lot invested in the NSP work plans, and wants to make sure these work plans are implemented through 2013. The committee that helped develop this plan recognized that the last plan was about new construction, increased housing choices across the city, a strong economy and growing homeownership. This plan addresses the foreclosure crisis and there is more focus on rental.

Next Mr. Pereira talked about the Housing Action Plan timeline beginning with the Housing Steering Committee, which was convened in June. Because most of the work in the next three-years is going to be NSP they wanted to have good representation from PED staff, ISP/NSP Team, and the Housing Team. Also, given the vacant building issue, they thought that the Department of Safety and Inspections should be a the table to talk about neighborhood issues, so they had representation from vacant buildings and code enforcement along with the aide to Council President Lantry and the aide to HRA Board chair Thune and two representatives from the Saint Paul Area Association of Realtors. They are now in the public comment period, the plan is up on a website as an outreach, trying to figure out who is interested in this and gather some public comments before the City Council public hearing on November 17, 2010.

Mr. Pereira showed maps and charts of the market context findings, the housing investments and housing sales in different subsectors of the city, a summary of potential City/HRA housing funds, 2010-2013 multi family housing projects, and a current City/HRA property inventory. PED will

do yearly updates to the market context data, reporting not only in the targets but on some of those indicators talked about earlier, citywide and Central Corridor specific. The draft plan website is: www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=4176.

Commissioner Ward said when the City changed its policy for rentals from inspecting only multi family to now also inspecting single family and duplex rentals, the first year there were 6,600 properties that needed to be inspected. That was about three years ago, now that list has grown from 6,600 to about 12,000 properties. What type of metrics does PED have to keep track of that in order to know that actual rentals are being reported and getting into the system as rentals, rather then slipping through the cracks?

Mr. Pereira said page 6 of the plan has some data on one and two family rental properties. It comes from the Department of Safety and Inspections. They are the entity that tracks that and are the best source for that information.

Commissioner Thao asked if there was anything in the action plan for rehab and helping homeowners who want to stay in there homes.

Mr. Pereira said there are two programs, the deferred program and the slightly higher income homeowners program. He thinks it is the MFHA fix it loan where the City writes down the interest rate to make it more affordable.

Commissioner Fernandez asked about the numbers of existing housing stock and the projected goals, and does it include all the different CDCs?

Mr. Pereira said that these are numbers associated with the City HRA directly. The City also funds various CDC rehab programs and those really would be an addition to these numbers.

Donna Drummond, Planning Director, wanted to remind the commissioners that anytime they want to find more information about planning projects to go to the City's website – www.stpaul.gov/ped and look under Planning.

VI. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Commissioner Commers had no report, but he announced that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 16, 2010.

VII. Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee

Commissioner Wencl announced the items on the agenda for the next Neighborhood Committee meeting on Wednesday, October 27, 2010.

VIII. Transportation Committee

Christina Morrison, PED staff reported that at the last meeting they talked about three major projects; one was an update on the Midtown Greenway also known as the Saint Paul Greenway. Over the summer the City lost a court case where the City took the railroad to condemnation for the land to build the Ayd Mill extension in Saint Paul. Saint Paul Smart Trips has a committee working on this. There was also an update from a MNDOT engineer who came to talk about the

I-94 reconstruction of the Hwy 280 to I-394 portion this summer, which is mostly in Minneapolis. Ms. Morrison announced the items on the agenda for the next meeting Transportation Committee meeting on Monday, October 25, 2010.

IX.	Commu	nications	Committee
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No report.

X. Task Force Reports

None.

XI. Old Business

Commissioner Kramer reported that a Nominating Committee had been appointed to nominate someone to fill the vacancy for Second Vice Chair, formerly held by Kristina Smitten. The committee met in person and electronically, and they are pleased to nominate Commissioner Barbara A. Wencl to fill the position of Second Vice Chair.

Chair Donnelly-Cohen called for nominations from the floor. There were none.

MOTION: Chair Donnelly-Cohen moved to close nominations and approve the ballot for Commissioner Barbara A. Wencl as Second Vice Chair. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

XII. New Business

None.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,	Approved November 5, 2010	
	(Date)	
Tome Tummerd		
Donna Drummond	Marilyn Porter	
Director of Planning	Secretary of the Planning Commission	